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SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION
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Evangelism Conf. kicks off January 31

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

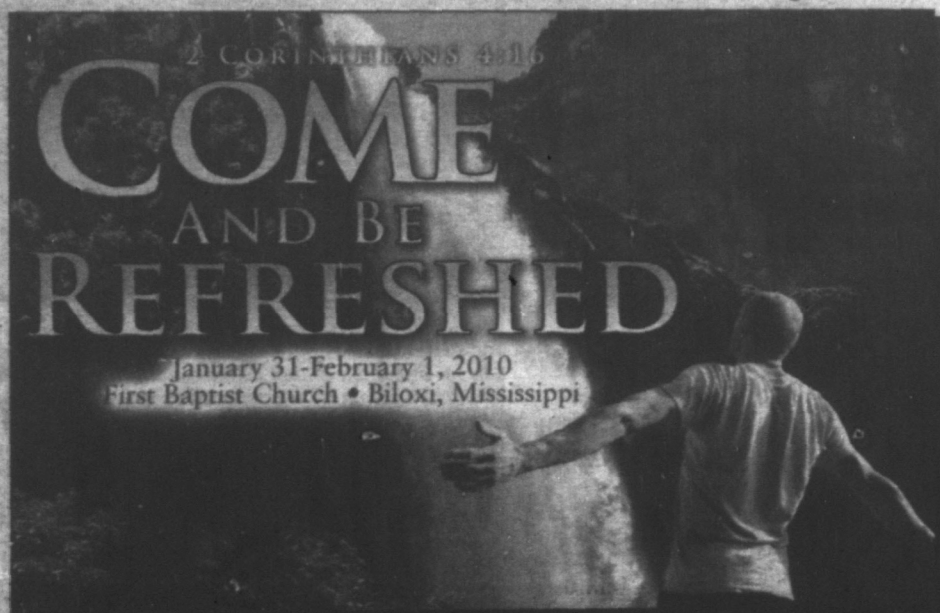
The Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference promises something for everyone, with a diverse roster of speakers and leaders. The event will be held at First Church, Biloxi, Jan. 31 - Feb. 1.

The theme this year is "Come and Be Refreshed," said Don Lum, director of evangelism for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB). "We need to come and be reminded of our purpose, and we need to come celebrate what God is doing. We are never going to say we've done enough, and we're never going to say we've baptized enough. We need to celebrate what God has done through His faithfulness, and we need to be challenged and reminded of what He is doing. Sometimes we get beat up and beat down, and we need to be sharpened and refocused."

The conference will begin at 6 p.m. Sunday night with praise and worship led by Wayne Grothman, First Church, Biloxi, and a message by Tony Merida, teaching pastor at Temple Church, Hattiesburg.

Monday's schedule is as follows:

Monday Morning
9:15-9:30 a.m. Praise and Worship
9:30-9:40 a.m. Welcome
9:40-10:25 a.m. Tony Merida,
Temple Church, Hattiesburg
10:25-10:40 a.m. Praise and Worship
10:40-11:30 a.m. Thom Rainer,
President of LifeWay Christian Resources
11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m. Break for Lunch



Monday Afternoon
1:15 - 2:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions
Conference 1 - Thom Rainer
Conference 2 - P.J. Scott
Conference 3 - Ronnie Cottingham and
Wayne Hudson
2:15-2:30 p.m. Break
2:30-3:15 p.m. Tamara Lowe,
Get Motivated Seminars, Inc.,
Tampa, Fla.
3:15-3:25 p.m. Praise/Worship

3:25-4:00 p.m. Preston Nix,
Associate Professor of Evangelism
and Evangelistic Preaching,
New Orleans Seminary
4:00-4:35 p.m. Hank Hough,
Kingdom Dog, Spring, Tex.
4:35-6:30 p.m. Break for Dinner
(on your own)

Monday Evening
6:30-6:45 p.m. Praise/Worship
6:45-7:30 p.m. Kevin Hamm,
First Church, Gardendale, Ala.

Breakout Sessions
Conference 1 "What I've Learned About
Evangelistic Churches"
Conference 2 "How to Reach Your
Community for Christ"
Conference 3 "The Who, the Why, and the
What of the Vocational Evangelist"

How You Can help in Haiti - Right Away

Officials are concerned that an unprecedented disaster situation following the earthquake in Haiti is developing. Fears are that as many as 200,000 people may be dead and 3 million people homeless. The response from America will last weeks.

Here's what we know...

- 900 Southern Baptist Churches in Haiti
- 70 of these churches are in Port au Prince
- Baptist Global Response (BGR) is the coordinating agency for Southern Baptist international disaster relief. Florida Baptist Convention has a partnership with Haiti and owns a ministry compound on the island.
- Mississippi and Kentucky are the lead states for international response for the month of January. Teams are on standby from these states to travel as soon as assessed needs can be known.



Here's what you can do

1. Pray - for the people of Haiti who have been devastated.
 - for Haitian government officials who will be coordinating relief.
 - for Haitian Christians as they recover and minister.
 - for the injured and displaced.
2. Give - to aid recovery efforts of Southern Baptists. Every penny will be used for the disaster response to Haiti.
 - following Hurricane disasters in Haiti, rice has been purchased by Baptist aid groups and distributed through churches. Many churches have been started as a result of this simple but important method of caring.
 - you can give through Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief designated for Haiti relief. The address is:

Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS. 39205

3. Get Organized to go - as needs and opportunities are identified.

- Up to date passport.
- Inoculations up to date.
- Self sustained teams living in primitive conditions will be needed.

4. For Additional Information

- Contact the Disaster Relief Ministry of the MS Baptist Convention Board at (601) 292-3334, or email haitidisasterrelief@mbcb.org.
- please check back often at www.mbcb.org for the latest updates.

5. Share Contact Information

- Many of our Mississippi Baptist Churches already have partnerships and connections with Baptist Churches in Haiti. If your church has a pre-existing connection to a church or ministry (orphanage, hospital, etc.) in Haiti, please share that information with the Disaster Relief Ministry of the MS Baptist Convention Board. (601) 292-3334 or email haitidisasterrelief@mbcb.org.

"This is a different conference from some we have done," said Lum. "We are trying to show pastors and church members there are different ways to do evangelism. We are excited to be back on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Mississippi Baptists have been such an important part of the work down there both pre- and post-Katrina, and we want folks down there to have a relationship with Christ."

"We're thankful for what God has done on the coast, but there are still many needs," Lum continued. "We hope the conference will be a part of the continued recovery from Katrina."

For more information on the State Evangelism Conference, contact Lum in the Evangelism Department, MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278. Email: jellis@mbcb.org.

The Mississippi Baptist State Evangelism Conference is supported annually by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program.

Pro-lifers pray, protest at Texas abortion clinic

By Bonnie Pritchett

HOUSTON (BP)—As two African American organizations gathered Jan. 18 on separate parade routes in Houston to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., a diverse gathering in a third location called attention to what they said is the new issue of the civil rights movement—the sanctity of human life—a cause they declared would have been championed by the late civil rights leader.

Speakers over the course of the two-day gathering in Houston included Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission; Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference; Abby Johnson, former director of a Planned Parenthood clinic; Harry Jackson, pastor of Hope Christian Church in Washington, D.C., and a leader in the black conservative movement; and many others from across the nation.

To commemorate the King holiday, the event included leaders of the African American and Hispanic Christian communities who charged Planned Parenthood with targeting minority populations. Planned Parenthood Federation is nearing completion in Houston of what organizers said would be the nation's largest abortion-providing clinic.

Attempts to contact Planned Parenthood Houston/Southeast Texas for a response went unanswered.

Land called the new facility a "monstrosity" and others said the site of the clinic is no coinci-

dence but merely representative of the racist ideals held by the organization's late founder, Margaret Sanger. "At the very least," Land said, the location is "making the taking of human life more convenient."

The new clinic is located just blocks from the University of Houston campus, the historically black Texas Southern University and within walking distance of predominantly black and Hispanic neighborhoods.

Other speakers pulled no punches in their accusations against the leading abortion provider in the nation.

Samuel Rodriguez said the "spirit of Herod" is alive and well, referencing the desperate king's

attempts to kill the baby Christ. Rodriguez said the building's location specifically targets minorities and begs the question, "Why is the devil so afraid of black babies and brown babies? It's time to turn the tide. Abortion is anti-Latino, anti-black and anti-life," he declared to the cheers of estimated 8,000-9,000 people gathered for a worship and prayer rally at the Catholic Charismatic Center, a few blocks from the 78,000-square-foot Planned Parenthood facility.

According to pro-life organizations in Houston, the clinic will be outfitted to perform



UNITING IN PRAYER - Abby Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood clinic director, prays with one of the organizers of a two-day prayer and protest rally in Houston over what they say will be the nation's largest abortion clinic. (Photo by Bonnie Pritchett)

late-term abortions, something Planned Parenthood Houston hasn't been legally equipped to do since legislation restricting the practice was passed in 2003.

Arnold Culbreath of Protecting Black Life in Cincinnati, Ohio, told the crowd that 62.5 percent of all Planned Parenthood clinics are located in predominantly black neighborhoods. When the clinics operating in Hispanic communities is added, Culbreath said the number located among minority populations rises to 76 percent.

Citing a National Vital

Statistics report dated October 2009, Culbreath reported the number of live births to black women was 587,000 and the number of abortions was 452,000.

"These numbers are dangerously close together," he said, adding that for the first time in American history the black population is not keeping up with the birth-to-death replacement rate.

Bonnie Pritchett is a correspondent for the Southern Baptist TEXAN (www.texanonline.net), newsjournal of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

Haiti relief contribution news from NAMB

William (Bill) Townes
CPA, MBA, North American
Mission Board

SPECIAL TO THE BAPTIST RECORD - On Friday, January 22, 2010, President Obama signed into law H.R. 4426, passed quickly by both the Senate and the House, which allows taxpayers to claim a charitable deduction in 2009 for cash (text message, check, credit card or debit card) gifts given for "relief of victims in areas affected by the earthquake in Haiti" made in the beginning of 2010.

Any gifts made after January 11, 2010 and prior to March 1, 2010 may be treated as if they were made on December 31, 2009. Therefore, a donor to a local church or state convention may claim a deduction in either 2009 or 2010 for any gifts made from January 12 - February 28, 2010 for Haiti relief.

What does this mean to the church/convention or other charitable organization?

1. Notify your Members: Local churches, convention or other charities that are accepting contributions for Haiti Earthquake Relief should notify their members of this immediate tax benefit which allows any gifts given after January 11, 2010 but before March 1, 2010 to be claimed as either a 2010 or 2009 tax deductible contribution. (Notices could be made in the weekly bulletin, newsletter or organizational website).

2. Issue Two Month Giving Statements (Jan/Feb 2010): Practically, a church/convention should issue a "short" charitable giving statement to individual donors, listing the amount and date of each contribution from January 1 - February 28, 2010 as it relates to gifts for relief work in Haiti. A short notice should be included on the giving statement (below the normal contribution statement verbiage) similar to the following:

"According to the IRS, any donations for "relief of victims in areas affected by the earthquake in Haiti" received between January 12, 2010 and February 28, 2010 may be claimed as a charitable deduction for income tax purposes in either 2009 or 2010, but not both."

3. 2010 Year End Giving Statements: As a service to their members, churches/conventions should include the wording above with their 2010 year end giving statements so donors can ensure that they do not accidentally deduct their contributions twice.

Looking back

10 years ago

The 2000 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference is held Jan. 21 - 22, with the first session being held at Ridgecrest Church, Madison, and the second session at the Mississippi Coliseum featuring a performance of God for Us with 2500 choir voices and the 170-piece Mississippi Baptist Symphony Orchestra.

20 years ago

Setting an Easter deadline, W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Church, Dallas, announces his intention to select his successor as pastor of Southern Baptists' largest church. Pastor search committee co-chairman Richard Clements said he did not take Criswell's implications seriously.

50 years ago

W.G. Mize, superintendent of the Baptist Orphanage, is retiring upon the occasion of his 25th anniversary; the Orphanage's board of Trustees announces.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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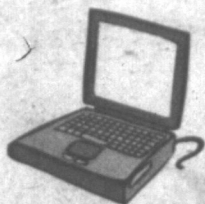
YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



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On Tiger Woods, Brit Hume, and redemption

Tiger Woods has been in the news a lot lately, and it hasn't exactly been because of his prowess on the golf course. His alleged affairs with any number of women has been fodder for newscasters and comics alike, and the story gets even more provincial when sources say that Woods is seeking treatment for sex addiction at a facility in Hattiesburg.

Those awful allegations aside, what has intrigued me even more has grown out of comments made by semi-retired Fox News anchor Brit Hume. On the Fox News Sunday broadcast January 3, in response to host Chris Wallace's question to the show's roundtable as to what the biggest sports story of 2010 would be, Hume answered:

"Tiger Woods will recover as a golfer. Whether he can recover as a person I think is a very open question, and it's a tragic situation for him. I think he's lost his family, it's not clear to me if he'll be able to have a relationship with his children, but the Tiger Woods that emerges once the news value dies out of this scandal — the extent to which he can recover — seems to me to depend on his faith. He's said to be a Buddhist; I don't think that

kind of faith offers the kind of forgiveness that is offered by the Christian faith. So my message to Tiger would be, Tiger, turn to the Christian faith and you can make a total recovery and be a great example to the world."

How very non-PC. Here is a news anchor, on a secular newscast, having the nerve to suggest that a personal relationship with Christ can actually redeem Tiger Woods. (Insert sarcastic tone here.) Critics ate this up. Washington Post staff writer Tom Shales, writing in the Jan. 5 edition, said that Hume was a "sanctimonious busybody." Shales wrote, "Whom did he sound more like — Mary Poppins on the



photo: Andy Green/Photo

joys of a tidy room, or Ron Popeil on the glories of some amazing potato peeler?

"Further," wrote Shales, "is it really his job to run around trying to drum up new business? He doesn't really have the authority, does he, unless one believes that every Christian by mandate must proselytize?"

Uh, Mr. Shales, yep. Christians call that mandate the Great Commission.

Christianity is, by its very nature, exclusive, and this gives critics of the faith fits. "I am the way and the truth and the life," Jesus said in John 14:6. "No one comes to the Father except through me." Consequently, non-believers characterize Christians as intolerant, bigoted, or worse.

Shales wrote that Hume "dissed about half a billion Buddhists on the planet with

the remark." Surely the world's religious faiths — be they Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, Zoroastrian, whatever — make claims about their beliefs that conflict with the claims of other faiths. In that sense, all religions are exclusive. What is striking is how Christianity seems to be singled out for exclusivity.

For Christianity to be tolerated in our current secular society, it has to stay tucked safely away in churches, never to enter into public discourse. Should anyone, heaven forbid, dare to share their faith in a public forum, then the response from secularists is that believers simply shut up and keep their opinions to themselves. What a splendid irony: those who advocate tolerance for all can be mighty intolerant when faced with any mention of Jesus and Him crucified.

The image of a suffering Savior on the cross, dying in agony for the sins of mankind, has to be uncomfortable for those predisposed to reject Christianity. Christianity is at its heart both confrontational and accepting; a person first has to realize their depravity, and that's not fun. But then comes the opportunity to accept Christ's offer of eternal life, given freely — coming to Jesus "just as you are." That requires an individual to acknowledge their inability to do anything for themselves — and for folks who have come to believe they are the center of their own private universe, humility doesn't come easily.

Brit Hume, in his words, "came to Christ in a way that was very meaningful to me," in the aftermath of his son's suicide in 1998. In his remarks on Fox News Sunday, Hume simply seemed to want the same peace for Tiger Woods that he himself had experienced. And Woods — indeed, anyone — can receive that peace.

GUEST OPINION:



A Parent's Heart

By Terry Farmer
member, Morrison Heights
Church, Clinton

Hearing the words, "I'm gay" coming out your child's body is heart wrenching. I felt as though I could not breathe. The moment I heard, my hearing also stopped. The pain I felt was like death. I grieved over dreams I had always had for my child. I cried uncontrollably for days and weeks — just grieving. Who could I call on? the church? All I had ever heard there were negative things about the issue of same-sex attraction, not aware that it was the same thing my child had experienced. I thought, how could my child tell anyone? All I could think of was the pain I was in, never once thinking of the pain my child had felt for years. Well, my story is not much different than that of many other parents with whom I have had the privilege of walking out this journey. My child went to our pastor first, then came home to us. Getting a call from our pastor the very next day was like opening the door of hope. I could hardly talk to him without sobbing, as he told me he was calling just to say: "I am praying for you!"

This journey has been a process for our family, along

with our pastor, in learning how to respond. Thankfully, after seeking Christian counseling for our child, I called the counselor and asked what I could do. He told me to connect with Exodus and Love Won Out; find a support group; and love my child. With this information I was able to find a support group for myself. That's how I found In His Time Ministry. In His Time is an Exodus member ministry and meets in Clinton at Morrison Heights Church.

I have to be honest. My intentions were only to go there to get help to fix my child. Walking through those doors for the first time as a mom was like coming home

to a welcoming feast at the table of the Lord. I felt as if I were being cradled in the arms of Christ. Sharing my story was difficult though, as I thought I would be judged for my parenting skills. It was so refreshing to experience firsthand how the Body of Christ can reach out to the hurting. After several weeks, I realized I was not there to fix my child. The Lord had a whole lot of fixing to do in this mom, healing my wounds and pains.

If you have ever heard the words "I'm gay" from your child; are a pastor and really do not know how to respond to this child or to the struggler's family or friends; are

that child who is in pain, and not knowing how you could ever share this with anyone; or if you have heard these words from your spouse, I encourage you to attend Restoration Grace Conference, Feb. 19-20, at Morrison Heights Church.

At Restoration Grace you will experience the response to homosexuality that every parent, pastor, struggler, spouse and the church needs to hear — the steadfast, unwavering love of God presented with compassion, grace and uncompromising faith. A response you will never have heard from most churches and that grasps and understands what I call "the liquid love of Christ." You do not get this from just attending church; you get this from receiving Christ through His body. For me it was what I had always longed to hear but never received. This loving response from the church to my pain and the pain of my child has truly been amazing grace.

Farmer is now a group leader at In His Time which meets weekly at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 28, 2010

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

Pray this day for...

January 29 – February 11, 2010

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

*"Joy is the lesson set for some,
For others pain the best teacher is:
We know not which for us shall come.
But both are Heaven's high ministries." Susan Coolidge*

(1) State Evangelism Conference, FBC, Biloxi (EVAN); (2) Pray for a revival in the United States where God's Holy Spirit convicts many that they may turn to the Lord, be saved, and begin to grow in the knowledge and demonstration of righteousness.

(1) Transitional Pastor Training, Garaywa, Clinton (CMR); (2) Pray for our soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world as they strive to protect our freedom and maintain peace. Pray for our chaplains ministering to them.

(1) True Love Waits (D&FM Emphasis); (2) Pray for a team from the **Lauderdale Baptist Association** as they travel to the Dominican Republic, Feb. 1-7, to continue on-going work there in the areas of evangelism and church planting.

(1) VBS Jumpstart, Liberty BC, Flowood (SS); (2) Pray for the families of those who have lost their lives while serving in our armed forces.

State Senior Adult Evangelism Rally, FBC, Biloxi (D&FM); (2) Pray for Bruce and Amanda Bosarge from **Wade Baptist Church in Moss Point** as they travel to Kenya, Feb. 2-27, seeking God's direction for future mission service.

Two teams from **Jones County Baptist Association** are traveling to Vancouver to be a part of the 2010 Olympic ministry. The first team will be there Feb. 9-19. Pray as they share Christ with people coming to the Olympics from all over the world.

(1) Baptist Building AT HOME DAYS, 3rd-5th; (2) Pray for a team from **FBC, Okolona**, as they travel to the Dominican Republic, Feb. 3-6, for the purpose of strategy development in an area where there isn't any mission work being done.

Pray for a team from **Fairview Baptist Church, Columbus**, and a team from FBC, Fulton, and they travel to Vancouver, Feb. 10-17, to be a part of the Olympic ministry.

(1) Mississippi Baptist Church Music Conference, Highland BC, Meridian (CM); (2) A team from **FBC, Charleston**, is traveling to Mexico, Feb. 6-13, to participate in Operation Go, a Gospel saturation project and ministry.

A team from **FBC, Biloxi**, is going to Vancouver, Feb. 11th-19th, to work with Towers Baptist Church in the area of evangelism in Vancouver. Pray for openness to their ministry.

(1) Haitian Baptists have lost much but know they have an opportunity to demonstrate God's hope to their countrymen. Pray for strength to serve while they themselves suffer, and for words of peace to share. (2) Area Keyboard Festivals, Longview Heights BC, Olive Branch; Cartersville BC, Petal (CM).

(1) Pray for food, water, shelter and medical assistance to be safely distributed for the homeless in Haiti; (2) Area Keyboard Festivals, Emmanuel BC, Grenada; North Greenwood BC, Greenwood (CM).

Pray for Misty Vance and her son Kobee, **Cleary BC, Florence**, as they travel to Guatemala, Feb. 6-13, to take part in medical missions among the Mayan people.

Pray for an upcoming dialogue with six church planters from Indiana as they seek to connect with **Mississippi churches** for the purpose of working together to plant new churches in Indiana.

FAMILY LIFE CONFERENCES

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.



Thursday, February 11

FBC, Saltillo • 662.869.5742

• 1-2-3 Magic for Christian Parenting – Chris Webb, FBC, Jackson

Monday, February 15

University BC, Hattiesburg • 601.264.6908

• Marriage Conference – Don Hicks, MBCB
• Transforming a Senior's Life – Glenn Shows, MBCB

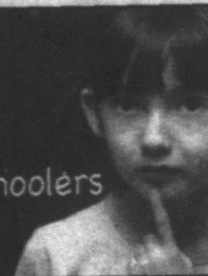
Thursday, February 18

Woodville BC, Woodville • 601.888.6313

• Marriage Conference – Glenn Shows, MBCB
• Finances for the Family – Jeff Doremus, FBC, Brookhaven

Discipleship & Family Ministry Department

How
Preschoolers
Learn



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Four hours of
State Health
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2010 (CEC)
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Clinics**

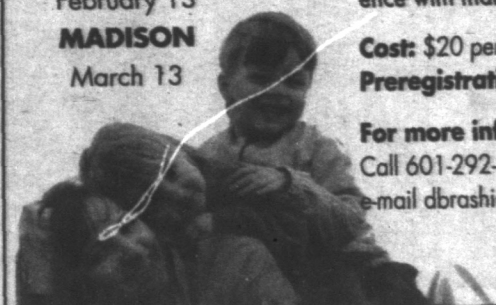
MERIDIAN
February 13
MADISON
March 13

An intentionally Christian training
event for Mothers Day Out,
Day Care and
Kindergarten Teachers

All presenters will be experienced Christian teachers who have years of experience with that age group.

Cost: \$20 per conferee
Preregistration is required

For more information:
Call 601-292-3284 or
e-mail dbrashier@mbcb.org



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By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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OVDKRVX, QKDDKG
CKH HBYH GBUJB UL
VRUD, OPH HBYH
GBUJB UL WKKX. BV
HBYH XKVHB WKKX UL
KQ WKX: OPH BV HBYH
XKVHB VRUD BYHB
CKH LVVC WKX.

HBUNX ZKBC VDVRC

Clue: R = V

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Jude Twenty-One

UNFRIEND

In November of 2009, the *Oxford Dictionary* announced their new words to be added to their dictionary. Annually they pick out the number one word that they are adding. It is the word that has become the most common but also in their estimation will stay in the vocabulary for years to come. The new number one word is **unfriend**. The word describes the world we live in with its worldwide web friend network. It describes the modern social networking in things like Facebook, Myspace, or even Twittering. Ever so often, I will receive a new email request from someone wanting me to be their friend and if I agree, I would become a part of their cluster of friends. Some folks have dozens of friends and some even claim to have even hundreds of thousands. So when you have some folks in your computer cluster group that you do not want there anymore, what do you do with those friends? You got it - you **unfriend** them.

That new word in the dictionary got me to thinking about this whole idea of friends because if you have not opened your eyes and looked around lately, you might not have noticed that the world is changing. This is just another example. How so you may ask. Well, just the use of the word friend is different today. At one time, the primary use of the word friend was defined as someone that you shared common interests with and a common care for each other. Old time friends were folks that did not necessarily share all of your interest and hobbies but there was a common appreciation for each other. Whether they lived close by or you only saw them occasionally, there was a kind of unspoken bonding and you genuinely appreciated and even admired the qualities in each other. You were friends. To say a person is your friend is a high position to place someone in or to be in yourself.

It was an amazing thing that took place in the life of Jesus' ministry and even more amazing what happened in the lives of His followers. Generally, they were called disciples. They were those people who listened, observed, and began to understand and even implement the things that the teacher was sharing. Ultimately, Jesus called them friends. They were not just servants, not just hired hands, and not just people on a mutual journey - they were friends. When you stop and think about it, friend may sound somewhat frivolous, but you will do things for friends that no amount of coercion could make you do otherwise and no amount of money could compel you to do. A friend is a treasure.

In today's world on the internet and out there in cyberspace, you can have unseen cyber



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

friends that you chat with and interact with over a keyboard and for a period of time you may even count them as friends. However, this new definition and new expression seems to me to be lacking in substance from what the word friend use to mean. No doubt, these cyber friends have the potential of connecting in various ways to share in a genuine friendship but, whether right or wrong, they do not seem to have the validity or depth of friendship of what we use to call friends.

I also recognize that a friendship has always had the potential of being a fragile thing, for sometimes you count people as a friend who really do not see you as a friend. At times, there are people who want to be your friend and you may not be open to sharing friendship. Whether over the internet or close by at work, it is worth taking time to think through those relationships with people whom you are calling a friend and who may be calling you their friend. That leads to the word **unfriend**. What does someone have to do to **unfriend** you or you them?

I suppose in the olden days it was the equivalent of just writing someone off, ignoring them, or being on the "outs" with a friend. Now this can take place with just the click of a mouse or a decision that you are no longer included in their circle. It sounds kind of bad that we can so easily discount someone's connection with us. As I thought about it, the other side of that may be a wakeup call. Maybe it is an

announcement that they do not want me in their friendship circle because I have not been a good friend. It just does not seem to be working so maybe it is time to shapeup or at least reshape your relationship and give it more prominence in your list of priorities or more meaning as you connect with each other.

Through the years, I have known significant friendships that people have had that ended tragically. There are so many different things that can be involved in the unfriending of someone in years gone by. Betrayal, disagreement over issues, ideas, or interests, miscommunication, misunder-

standing, distance, and sometimes just pure dislike can come into the picture. Friends are tremendous commodities in life and the more you have the better off you are.

The writer of Proverbs says, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24). As I grew up, I would hear that verse quoted most often about Jesus. It certainly fits Him. He is the kind of friend that will always stick close to you and not **unfriend** you. The writer of Proverbs was probably thinking about someone he actually knew who was a friend through thick and thin, good times and bad, and in great achievement or great tragedy. A friend would stick with you. In today's vocabulary, there are some friends and especially my friend Jesus who will not **unfriend** us.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

MS POSITIONS

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Southern Baptist assessment team identifies Haitian needs

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (BP and local reports)—Conditions on the ground in Haiti are very difficult, a member of Southern Baptists' joint assessment team reported from Port-au-Prince Jan. 20. The team includes Don Gann, consultant, Men's Ministry department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. A U.S. military commander, however, said important progress has been made on enlarging the conduit for relief shipments into the quake-ravaged island nation.

"We've seen quite a bit of damage — more so toward the center of the city," reported Jim Brown, U. S. director for Baptist Global Response, in a terse e-mail sent from his cell phone. "We've helped with a couple of deliveries. Helicopters everywhere. People still being found alive!"

In another report, relayed to a meeting of the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Network, team member Bruce Poss indicated that traffic in Port-au-Prince is terrible, with milling crowds making for serious travel and security concerns. He reported seeing 5,000 or more people lined up outside the U.S. Embassy in the capital.

The five-member team delivered relief supplies — water, plastic sheeting, bottled gas, beans, rice, eggs, diesel fuel, canned goods — to a couple of churches and orphanages, Brown said. They were planning to connect with a Florida Baptist assessment



ON THE GROUND - Coy Webb (left), state disaster relief director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Ralph Shealy of South Carolina, and Don Gann (right), state disaster relief director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention, are in earthquake-ravaged Port-au-Prince, Haiti, serving on the five-person Southern Baptist Disaster Relief assessment team. Here, they're visiting Siloe Baptist Church, whose pastor perished in the earthquake. (Photo by Bruce Poss)

team later in the day.

A U.S. military commander said the flow of relief supplies into Haiti would be helped by the opening of three new airfields and the country's seaport, news services reported. Gen. Douglas Fraser, who heads the U.S. Southern Command, told the Miami Herald the capital's seaport would reopen Jan. 21 and could accommodate about 150 shipping containers per

day. The port's capacity was expected to grow to 250 containers per day by Jan. 22.

The main airport in Port-au-Prince, which has one runway and one loading ramp, has been a bottleneck for the arrival of humanitarian aid, even after it was reopened. A total of 1,400 flights are backlogged to land at the airfield, Fraser said. Because congestion on the roads has been hindering delivery of relief supplies,

63 U.S. helicopters have been dropping water, food and medical supplies into the most inaccessible areas, he told the newspaper.

The U.S. military has distributed 1.4 million bottles of water, more than 700,000 meals and about 22,000 pounds of medical supplies directly to people in need, Fraser said.

As many as 2 million Haitians are homeless after the Jan. 12 earthquake, relief officials say, with vast numbers of people living in makeshift tents made of sheets and sticks. The estimated death toll stands at 200,000, but humanitarian medical groups warn that number will continue to grow as people die of untreated injuries and disease that infects the ramshackle camps, news services report.

The Disaster Relief Ministry of the MBCB will be sending a 10-person medical team into Haiti Jan. 30. Visit www.mbc.org for updated news on relief efforts. Donations can be made by visiting the same website, or by writing a check to Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief designated for Haiti relief. The address is:

Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205

The Southern Baptist relief effort, like the one mounted after Hurricane Katrina and the South Asia tsunami, will be focused on the long term, Mickey Caison, who directs disaster operations for the North American Mission Board, told the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Network Jan. 20. Previous strategies have focused on short-term help for people being missed by large-scale humanitarian projects and a long-term emphasis on helping people rebuild their lives and communities.

The International Mission Board's prayer office released a Jan. 21 alert urging intercession for Southern Baptist relief workers already on the ground in Haiti, as well as the people of Haiti themselves.

"Pray ... for the IMB missionaries who have been in Haiti ministering in very difficult circumstances. Ask God to strengthen them and help them to deal with the extremely sad situations they are witnessing," the alert said. "Pray for the five IMB missionaries who had served in Haiti for many years and the grief they are experiencing from losing close friends. Continue to pray for the Haitian people as they come to grips with lost loved ones and a difficult future."

For more information on relief efforts, call (601) 292-3334 or email haitidisasterrelief@mbcb.org.

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REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. Sarepta Church, Franklin County: 200th anniversary; year long celebration; speakers, Webb Armstrong, February; Tim Shelby, March; Daryl Oster April; TBA, May; Odus Jackson, June; Jim Futral, July; Wiley Reid, August; pastor Billy J. Howse, September. The church was founded Sept. 23, 1810.

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COLLEGE NEWS

1. Blue Mountain College will offer Winter Fest 2010 for prospective students and parents Jan. 30. Students will register at 9:30 a.m. and early registrants will be able to tour the campus until a "mock class" with faculty members at 10 a.m. Representatives from the admissions and financial aid departments will meet with participants at 11 a.m. Lunch will be served at noon, and more campus tours will be available until 1:45 p.m. when visitors will be guests at the BMC basketball games against Lyon College. For information, contact the Office of Admissions at (800) 235-0136 or admissions@bmc.edu.
2. Ken Weathersby, a graduate of Mississippi College, will bring the 2010 Evangelism Lectures Feb. 1 and 2 at MC. He will speak at Anderson Hall East at 7 p.m. Monday and at First Church, Clinton, in chapel Tuesday. He will also deliver two lectures Tuesday at 1 and 2:30 p.m. in the B.C. Rogers Board Room. Weathersby is Vice-President of the Church Planting Group with the North American Mission Board.
3. Gore Galleries at Mississippi College will present an exhibit by MC graduate and longtime art professor Kenneth M. Quinn through Feb. 14. For more information, contact Randy Jolly at (601) 925-7770 or rjolly@mc.edu.

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BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Wrestling with Work

Ecclesiastes 2:18-26; 5:18-20

By Barbara Brown

"I owe, I owe, so off to work I go."

The meaning found in this familiar bumper sticker is far too real for a vast number of men and women for whom the debt they owe is the chief motivation for the work they do.

For many others, work defines their very reason for being and so their time, conversation, and the choices they make are all wrapped up in the job they do, often to the exclusion of those closest to them. Their personal significance is found in their work. For still others, work is the tool being used to import meaning into their lives. These people are on a never-ending quest for the answers to "What is the meaning of life?" and "Why am I here?" They are certain that working hard at a good job will

bring the fulfillment and the meaning for which they search day and night. And then there are those whose labor is motivated by the legacy they wish to leave behind — accumulated wealth, a great name, or position.

The emptiness of work

The trouble is that income, significance, meaning, and legacy, although admirable, are fleeting. The Teacher, the author of Ecclesiastes, continues the theme he began in chapter 1, by saying that work for any of these reasons is just plain empty and without meaning. In fact he says, "What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun? All his days his work is pain and grief... This too is meaningless." (2:22-23) (We should note here that the Teacher includes the phrase "under the sun" 29 times



Brown

how hard we work; nothing we can do on our own adds one bit of meaning to this life.)

Work apart from God

Charles Swindoll, in his book *Growing Strong*, related this story:

A first grader became curious because her father brought home a briefcase full of papers every evening. Her mother explained, "Daddy has so much to do that he can't finish it all at the office. That's why he has to bring work home at night." "Well then," asked the child innocently, "why don't they put him in a slower group?"

Work, apart from God, never seems to be done. The enemy of time, relationships, and the kind of complete ful-

fillment we find in the Lord deceives men into believing they are just one deal away from happiness, one project away from notoriety, one day away from the next big raise. But even when those are achieved, it seems there is more work to do.

The Teacher reminds us that work is not ever going to provide the significance and meaning and fulfillment we truly long for. Apart from God, work is nothing but meaningless toil that leaves us filled with despair. (2:18-20)

Joy in work: a gift from God

According to one poll, only 43 percent of American office workers are satisfied with their jobs. In Japan, the figure dips to 17 percent. In the first century, Christian slaves had even less reason to be enthusiastic about their work. But Paul gave them a way to grasp a glimpse of glory amid the grind. He wanted them to "adorn the doctrine of God," that is, to show the beauty of their faith in Christ by how they work. (Timothy 2:10) (*Daily Bread*, September 5, 1994)

The truth is that the way we work is much more important than what job we do or the list of accomplishments we accrue as we do it. Martin Luther understood this when he wrote, "The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays — not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship."

Only God can bring joy to our labor. It is His gift to His children. The Teacher wrote, "When God gives any man wealth and possessions and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work — this is a gift of God." (5:19)

Brown is children's minister, Colonial Heights Church, Ridgeland.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

How to Be Successful

Mark 10:32-45

By Malcolm Woody

The days are wrought with opposition. The popularity of the early days ebbs as more people reject Jesus. He has traveled freely throughout Galilee, but now He directs his path toward Jerusalem with fierce resolve. This action appears puzzling as though He is purposely marching into the den of His most ardent adversaries. Thomas is sure it is a death mission (Jn. 11:16). You decide to see for yourself as Jesus travels toward Jerusalem with Passover approaching.

After some tough teaching on possessions and the future, Jesus walks ahead of the group. Simon Peter, the unappointed but boisterous spokesperson of the twelve is troubled as he considers all he left behind to follow Jesus (Mk. 10:28). The

mood of the entire group is somber and they are amazed at what Jesus is doing.

Then Jesus stops and takes the twelve aside. You are close enough to hear. "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles. And they will mock him and spit on him, and flog him and kill him. And after three days he will rise." (Mk. 10:33-34 ESV) The grim news of death is delivered for the third time, but no one is any nearer understanding it.

Soon after the two Sons of Thunder, James and John, approach Jesus, undeterred, with their mother, Salome, and make a request. They ask for the choice seats on the left and



Woody

right of Jesus when He is crowned. Jesus asks, "You don't really know what you're asking! Are you able to drink from the cup that I must soon drink from or be baptized as I must be baptized?" (Mk. 10:38 CEV)

"We are able" (Mk. 10:39 HCSB),

they tell Him. Jesus then assures them they will drink of the same cup and be baptized with the same baptism, however the seats around the throne are already reserved, predetermined in preparation for the day. Hearing this, the others of the twelve become furious with James and John. Their father, Zebedee, employed men in the fishing business (Mk. 1:20). You are sure the others believe James and John are attempting to ride the cloak of their father's status to gain rank. Furthermore, how they rank has always been of high importance to the twelve.

As we consider this story, James and John really didn't know what they were asking.

They wanted a throne and what Jesus passed onto them was a cup of suffering. Consider that James is the first to be martyred of the twelve (Acts 8:1-2) and by most all historical accounts John is the last of the twelve to die having spent time in exile and enduring much persecution. Herod could have attempted to kill any of the twelve, but he singled out James, one of the most prominent of the twelve. I've always wondered how John must have suffered hearing of the demise of his brother, then his friends, one by one, till he was the last leaf on the tree. Interestingly, James was first in death and John was last, which is a remarkable thought as Jesus would instruct that the first shall be last and the last shall be first. The two Sons of Thunder took both places in death.

As we ponder success in our own time, ask yourself how the secular world perceives success in stark contrast with the ideals of Christ. By the world's standard, first is first and never last,

and being last is basically deplorable — a loser in the grandest sense of the word. Jesus would put greatness by his estimation simply:

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mk. 10:45 NKJV)

As we read this statement make no mistake about the meaning. As Christians (literally "Little Christs" in the Greek) we are to adhere to His example. We are to serve. How have you served in your congregation? Do you look for others to serve you? Where is your church needing servants? Teaching. Youth volunteers. Children's ministry (Jesus is fond of those little kids). Nursery. Parking. Welcoming. Visitor outreach. Not sure? Ask your pastor, I will assure you he'll have some ideas for you. Oh, and don't worry about being gifted, Jesus will meet you outside your comfort zone. He loves to walk with us there.

Woody is a member of Broadmoor Church, Madison.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

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Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



3. Troy First Church, Pontotoc



4. North Columbia Church, Columbia



5. Metro Church, Jackson



6. Liberty Church, Kemper County

1. Leflore Church, Holcomb, will host a singing Jan. 30, 2 p.m., featuring The Slaton Family, Promised, Voices of Faith, Second Change and many others. Hamburger and hot dog plates will be for sale. For information, call Larry Livingston at (662) 229-8990 or 227-1259.

2. Harrisville Church, Harrisville, will host Karen Peck & New River in concert Jan. 31, 5:30 p.m. A love offering will be received.

3. Troy First Church, Pontotoc, presented the Christmas cantata, "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year," Dec. 20. Shown are the participants. David McGehee, minister of music.

4. The children's church of North Columbia Church, Columbia, celebrated Jesus' birthday with cake, pizza, and soda Dec. 20. Shown are the participants.

5. Metro Church, Jackson, ordained John Wesley Patterson to the gospel ministry Nov. 21, 2009. Shown are Patterson and pastor Michael Simpson.

6. Liberty Church, Kemper County, recently ordained four new deacons. Shown are Jas Bounds, James Key, Jr., pastor Allen Herrington, Ryan Clay, and Billy Bradford.

7. Lakeside Baptist Assembly, an entity of North Central Association, recently held its annual New Year's gospel singing with 16 churches represented and 128 registered attendees. Receipts from the evening totaled \$1322, all of which goes toward camp operations. Shown burning the note on the loan of the camp's activity building is Elbert McKnight, chairman of the board of trustees for the camp. The camp is available for use by area churches, BSU's, and other Christian groups. Call (662) 226-5071 or 647-2834 for reservations.

8. Walthall Church, Webster County, recently ordained two deacons. Shown are Jesse Dorroh, interim pastor Jerry Bishop, and Kenny Carmichael.



7. Lakeside Assembly note burning



8. Walthall Church, Webster County

STAFF CHANGES



1. The Moreas

1. Progress Church, McComb, has called Josh Morea as pastor. Shown is Morea, wife Allison, and son Taylor standing in front of the new pastor's home, which is debt free.

2. Immanuel Church, Cleveland, has called Steve Huber as its 5th pastor in the church's 55-year history. Shown is Huber and his wife Ann. They have four children: Matthew, Daniel, Joel, and Rachel.



2. The Hubers

JUST FOR THE RECORD



3. Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale



4. Cascilla Church, Grenada



5. Donegan retirement reception



6. Franklin Creek Church, Moss Point

1. Victory Church, Mathiston, will have a fifth Sunday fellowship Jan. 31, with Blue Mountain College in charge of the day. Worship, 11 a.m.; potluck meal; singing, 1:30 p.m.

2. Concord Church, Booneville, will host the Master's Quartet Jan. 31, 6 p.m. A fellowship supper will be served at 5 p.m.

3. Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale, ordained Reggie Howell and Allen Lee as deacons and Scott Stribling was returned to the active council Jan. 3. Shown are Howell, Stribling, and Lee.

4. Youth and adults of Cascilla Church, Grenada, prepared cookies and goodie bags Dec. 12 to share with the residents of Graceland, Grenada. Shown are some of the participants.

5. Lamar Association honored Fay Donegan upon retiring as a volunteer in the Lamar Association Mission Center. Donegan served from May, 1985 - Dec., 2009. Shown, front row, are Douglas Benedict, Sr., Donegan, and Billy Murphy; back row, Ernie Sadler and AMD Danny Henderson.

6. Franklin Creek Church, Moss Point, ordained Dale Davis, Jr., as deacon Jan. 17. Shown are pastor John Pemberton, Davis, Katie Davis, Jake Davis, and Olivia Davis.

7. Calvary Church, Vicksburg, ordained Riley Nelson and Quint Stinson as deacons. Shown, photo A, are pastor Macon Phillips, Brenda Nelson, Nelson, and Mike Sullivan; photo B, Macon Phillips, Stinson, Sandra Stinson, Jennifer Stinson, and Mike Sullivan.

8. Steele Church, Forest, recently held a baby dedication. Shown are Keith and Pam Warren, Braiden and Chloe, Trent and Renee Crimm, Meagon, Jeffery and Cathy Cooper, Raylee and pastor Reggie Williams.

9. The adult Sunday School class of Eastside Church, Pearl, gave a Christmas party with gifts for the residents at the Mississippi State Hospital Jacquith Nursing Home Dec. 3. Shown are the participants.



7a. Calvary Church, Vicksburg



7b. Calvary Church, Vicksburg



8. Steele Church, Forest



9. Eastside Church, Pearl